people's participation in all aspects of the project. The total duration of the project is six years starting 1995-96.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) It is proposed to afforest 2,30,795 hectares inclusive of 1,57,295 hectares of forest area and 73,500 hectares of non-forest area during the project period. The project would be completed by 2000-2001.

**Auction of Letters of Gandhiji**

920. SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there has been an attempt to auction some letters of Gandhiji; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI S.R. BOMMAI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) It came to the notice of the Government that Shri V. Kalyanam, a stenographer of Mahatma Gandhi during the period 1944-48, was trying to put to auction certain papers/ letters writte by Mahatma Gandhi, through Phillips International Auctioneers & Vendors, London. Contact was accordingly made with Shri Kalyanam, Indian High Commission in London and Navajivan Trust, Ahmedabad to devise and undertake steps to prevent the auction.

A suit was filed by the Navajivan Trust in the High Court of Judicature at Madras seeking injunction against the auction of Mahatma Gandhi papers. The High Court issued interim injunction restraining the respondents/ defendants or any one claiming or acting under them from in any manner dealing with or parting with the possession of Gandhiji's papers pending the disposal of the suit. The Court likewise gave an interim injunction against infringement of the Copyrights of Navajivan Trust.

Taking note of the claim of Navajivan Trust on the papers, the Auctioneers decided to call off the auction which was due to be held on 14th November, 1996.

**High rate of Women Illiteracy**

921. PROF. NAUNIHAL SINGH: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the rates of women illiteracy, State-wise at the end of each of the last three census;

(b) the reasons for high rate of illiteracy among women, especially in States like Bihar, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and Uttar Pradesh;

(c) whether it is a fact that high rate of female illiteracy leads to higher birth rate; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by Government to improve the female literacy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MUHI RAM SAIKIA): (a) A statement is enclosed. (*See* below)

(b) Historically, a variety of factors have been found ot be responsible for poor female literacy rate. Low enrolment of girls in schools, low retention rate and high drop out rate along with several other socio-economic reasons are responsible for poor female literacy rate in these areas.

(c) It has generally been noticed that the States with High rate of female illiteracy have also high birth rate.

(d) The Scheme of Universalisation of Elementary Education, Non-Formal Education for School Drop-outs, Total Literacy Campaigns of the National Literacy Mission form the the three pronged strategy for increasing female literacy in the country.

**Statement**

**Rate of Women Illiteracy**

| India/State or Union Territory | | Illiteracy Rate 1971 | 1981 | 1991 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| States | | | | |
| 1. | Andhra Pradesh | 84.25 | 79.61 | 67.28 |
| 2. | Arunachal Pradesh | 96.29 | 88.68 | 70.31 |
| 3. | Assam | 80.73 | * | 56.97 |
| 4. | Bihar | 91.28 | 86.38 | 77.11 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5. | Goa | * | 52.44 | 32.91 |
| 6. | Gujarat | 75.25 | 67.80 | 51.36 |
| 7. | Haryana | 85.20 | 77.73 | 59.53 |
| 8. | Himachal Pradesh | 79.77 | 68.54 | 47.87 |
| 9. | Jammu & Kashmir | 90.72 | 84.12 | * |
| 10. | Karnataka | 79.03 | 72.29 | 55.66 |
| 11. | Kerala | 45.69 | 34.27 | 13.83 |
| 12. | Madhya Pradesh | 89.08 | 84.47 | 71.15 |
| 13. | Maharashtra | 73.57 | 65.21 | 47.68 |
| 14. | Manipur | 80.47 | 70.94 | 52.40 |
| 15. | Meghalaya | 75.44 | 69.92 | 55.15 |
| 16. | Mizoram | * | 45.09 | 21.40 |
| 17. | Nagaland | 81.95 | 66.11 | 45.25 |
| 18. | Orissa | 86.08 | 78.88 | 65.32 |
| 19. | Punjab | 74.10 | 66.31 | 49.58 |
| 20. | Rajasthan | 91.54 | 88.58 | 79.56 |
| 21. | Sikkim | * | 77.80 | 53.31 |
| 22. | Tamil Nadu | 73.14 | 65.01 | 48.67 |
| 23. | Tripura | 78.81 | 68.00 | 50.35 |
| 24. | Uttar Pradesh | 89.45 | 85.96 | 74.69 |
| 25. | West Bengal | 77.58 | 69.75 | 53.44 |
| 26. | A&N Islands | 68.89 | 57.86 | 34.54 |
| 27. | Chandigarh | 45.65 | 40.69 | 27.66 |
| 28. | Dadar & Nagar Haveli | 92.16 | 83.22 | 73.02 |
| 29. | Daman & Diu | 64.91 | 52.44 | 40.60 |
| 30. | NCT of Delhi | 52.25 | 46.93 | 33.01 |
| 31. | Lakshdweep | 69.44 | 55.35 | 27.11 |
| 32. | Pondicherry | 65.38 | 54.29 | 34.37 |
| | India | 81.30 | 75.18 | 60.61 |

* Census not conducted

**Track Renewal in Gujarat**

922. SHRI GOPALSINGH G. SOLANKI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Western Railway has earmarked a programme of track renewal in Gujarat;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the targets for track renewal are not being achieved; and

(d) if so, the status of targets and achievements in this regard in Western Railway, particularly in Gujarat?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Track renwal of around 287.33 kms. have been sanctioned in Gujarat State as on 1.4.96.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Dos not arise.

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12.00 NOON

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN *in the chair*

**PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE**

I. Notifications of the Ministry of Agriculture.

II. M.O.U (1996-97) between the Govt. of India and National Seeds Corporation.

The Minister of Agriculture (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): Madam I lay on the Table:—

I. A copy each (in English and Hindi) of the following Notifications of the Ministry of Agriculture (Department of Agriculture and Cooperation) under sub-section (6) of Section 3 of the Essential Commodities Act, 1955:—

(1) S.O. No. 672(E), dated the 1st October, 1996 indicating the supplies of fertilizers to be made domestic manufacturers of fertilizers to various States, Union Territories/commodity Board during Rabi season 1996-97.

(2) S.O. No. 753(E), dated the 31st October, 1996 notifying relaxation in specification of Potassium Chloride (Muriate of Potash) imported into India from CIS countries.

(Placed in Library. *See* No. LT-644/96)

II. A copy (in English and Hindi) of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of India (Ministry of Agriculture Department of Agriculture and Co-operation) and National Seeds Corporation (NSC)